

Committee Work – Guide for Facilitators

Reproduced from DFI and Acharai

Introduction- Start off by asking the group a few questions (use “Principles of Effective committee work” module created by DFI and The Ringel Group)

1. Who you are; what you do; do you work with committees currently?
2. What brought you to this session today?
 - Think about a challenging situation or struggle you have had with a committee.
 - What went wrong?
 - Why was it not as effective as it could be, etc.; Write it down
3. Share some of the challenges as a group

Share objectives for session:

- Why we need committees
- Lay/Pro roles (share handout-put in workbook)
- What committees do- before, during and after a meeting (Helping your committee accomplish its agenda)
- Group dynamics
- Sharing of challenging situations- problem solving

Why committees are needed (Open to group): Participants will share responses below:

- Delegate responsibility
- Broaden investment in mission
- New ideas
- Range of expertise
- Democratic process

Before the Committee is established, lay leaders & professionals need to think about the following questions:

- Who is the right chair? What traits, leadership style, skills, knowledge are important? Discuss contracting; every relationship different; expectations/role of chair and what the committee is charged with
- Contracting roles in every relationship- speak to our relationship
- Develop overall mission, goals, scope of committee work (developing committee member job responsibilities), evaluation measurements- share our

- outcome measurement tool
- Determine is this actually a committee or task force-discuss differences
- Identifying potential committee members, (Like drafting a football team, composition depends on goal)-key stakeholders, "friends", thinking of succession plan (vice-chairs, possible replacements); Size of the committee (is role to disseminate information vs. decision making?); making sure we are targeting people who care or are passionate about the topic/work
- Recruitment of committee members; sharing of roles and responsibilities – realistic expectations

Once the committee is established, there are three steps that provide for an effective Committee Meeting. The steps include (before, during, and after the Committee Meeting):

Before the Committee Meeting:

- Logistics-preparation, room reservations, minute taking
- Agenda setting for each committee meeting; what do we want to accomplish (what things need to happen, what things can play out in a variety of ways)
- Pre-meeting buy-in

During the Committee Meeting:

- At first meeting, setting ground rules with group
- laying out the objectives for the committee and for this particular meeting; Returning to them at end, were they accomplished?
- Running the committee meetings/format
- Management of group dynamics (discuss more later)

After the Committee Meeting:

- Minutes, implementation/execution of next steps
- Individual follow up conversations-continuing to gain buy in, assuring comfort, etc.
- Identify needs for course correction

Group Dynamics

- Understanding what motivates a person, mixed with personality style; recognizing that the role a person plays in a meeting is different, depending on the volunteer role or pro role he/she is serving in
- Different roles that people play-ask for examples: leader (focuses task), opinionated/challenger, elder statesman, nay-sayer, quiet one; what types of roles do you need represented? What is the benefit of having each person at the table (maybe has historical knowledge, etc.). Think about before recruiting
- How to handle the different types
- Role of chair/pro – to keep things on track; use of parking lot

In summary, Keys to success

- The relationships between chair and pro AND chair/pro and individual committee members (and the committee as a whole); clear expectations and goals; pre- meeting work and post work-not just the "actual meeting"